

DPHSWD in Rwanda



Accomplishments in Rwanda

- Established first cohort in 2010 with 15 residents scheduled to graduate in 2012.
- Enrolled second cohort of 15 residents in 2012.
- In 2011, residents conducted 15 outbreak investigations and 10 surveillance system evaluations.
- Residents conducted 15 operational research projects on topics such as anemia in children, injuries, avian influenza, HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, bacterial antimicrobial resistance.
- Residents shared vital lessons learned by publishing scientific papers on IDSR implementation and the influenza surveillance system.
- Residents gave 18 presentations at scientific conferences on various topics including outbreaks of botulism, cholera, measles and epidemic typhus.
- Residents trained 143 health workers in outbreak investigation and response, public health surveillance and data management to improve disease detection and response.

Overview and Goals

In 2008, at the request of the Government of Rwanda, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) office in Rwanda collaborated with the Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development (DPHSWD), the Rwanda Ministry of Health and other external partners to establish the Rwanda Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (R-FELTP). In May 2010, in partnership with PEPFAR and the African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET), the R-FELTP was launched.

The goals of the R-FELTP are to build workforce capacity by training health sector leaders in applied epidemiology and public health laboratory practice; to strengthen public health systems, including laboratory participation in disease surveillance and field investigations; and to strengthen public health institutions by providing epidemiologic and laboratory services to national and sub-national health authorities in Rwanda. The overarching goal of the program is to reduce the burden of major public health problems in Rwanda.

Program Description

Building Workforce Capacity

The R-FELTP is a two-year residency training program in applied epidemiology and public health laboratory practice. The program is designed to train field epidemiology residents, public health and veterinary laboratory residents, and veterinary field epidemiology residents for leadership positions primarily within the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA). The residents provide service to MOH within the Rwanda Biomedical Center district hospitals and Rwanda Animal Resource Development Authority (RARDA) during their training through field placements.

Strengthening Public Health Systems

R-FELTP trainees and short course graduates have contributed to the strengthening of health systems in Rwanda. Achievements include the detection and investigation of 17 disease outbreaks, evaluations of 10 surveillance systems, 143 health care workers from all 30 districts trained in disease surveillance and outbreak response, and residents' execution of 15 health operations research projects. The program actively participated in developing technical guidelines and implementing the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) framework in Rwanda.

Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure and Institutions

R-FELTP trainees are senior MOH/MOA leaders who manage national programs and advocate for public health issues at the central level. Through R-FELTP they gain skills in scientific writing, presenting public health information, and utilizing data for decision making. By training these key individuals, the program enriches the scientific capacity of major public health institutions in Rwanda.



Honorable Minister of Health Dr. Agnes Binagwaho in classroom teaching management and leadership course to Rwanda FELTP residents.



Resident advisor, Dr. Antara, and Rwanda FELTP residents, Drs. Emmanuel Sabayesu, Claude Rutanga, and Samson Ntegeyibizaza, navigating waters of lake Kivu on their way to Nkombo Island to investigate and respond to Cholera outbreak, 2011.



Rwanda FELTP residents, Drs. Marie-Aimee Muhimpundu, Samson Ntegeyibizaza, and Landry Ndriko Mayigane performing records review at health facility during measles outbreak, 2011.

Future Plans

DPHSWD will continue to support the R-FELTP and work with partners to achieve the following priorities:

- Develop a three year strategic plan for the R-FELTP that will define a path towards program sustainability
- Diversify sources of funding
- Assist in completing a strategic plan for the Epidemic Infections Disease Division within the Rwanda Ministry of Health Continue to support the MOH in developing and implementing an IDSR system
- Develop a plan for rabies control with the Ministry of Agriculture

Key Partners

- Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
- Ministry of Health, including Rwanda Biomedical Center's Institute of HIV Disease Prevention and Control
- National University of Rwanda School of Public Health
- TEPHINET
- AFENET
- CDC Rwanda, CDC Division of Global HIV/AIDS

Sponsors

- President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)
- The World Bank
- President's Malaria Initiative (PMI)

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